

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Independent claims 1 and 16 have been amended to include the formation of a skirt formed during the dry etching of the barrier layer. The advantages of such a skirt are described in the disclosure. The formation of a skirt is not described in the Datta, Ashby et al., Backus, or the Homma references either singly or in combination. The skirt provides the instant invention with advantages not contemplated in the prior art. Amended claims 1 and 16 are allowed over the previously cited art.

Claims 2-10 depend on claim 1 and are also allowable over the cited art for the reasons given above. In addition, claims 17-20 depend on independent claim 16 and are also allowable over the cited art for the reasons given above.

In light of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance, and notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

While it is believed that the instant response places the application in condition for allowance, should the Examiner have any further comments or suggestions, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact the undersigned in order to expeditiously resolve any outstanding issues.

To the extent necessary, Applicants petition for an Extension of Time under 37 CFR 1.136. Please charge any fees in connection with the filing of this paper, including

extension of time fees, to the deposit account of Texas Instruments Incorporated,
Account No. 20-0668.

Respectfully submitted,

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